

Town of Mansfield

Personnel Committee

January 8, 2007

Audrey Beck Municipal Building, Conference Room B

Members Present: Mayor Elizabeth Paterson, Deputy Mayor Greg Haddad, Councilor Helen Koehn, Councilor Chris Paulhus

Staff Present: Town Manager Matthew Hart, Assistant to the Town Manager Maria Capriola

1) **Classification Reviews**

Classification reviews are currently being conducted for three positions: Management Assistant (Executive Assistant); Capital Projects and Personnel Assistant; and Deputy Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director. Randi Frank Consulting is conducting the classification reviews. Councilor Koehn recommended that it may be beneficial to the Town Manager to have the consultant conduct random sampling by scoring some other Town positions to determine if the consultant scores high, low, or consistent with existing scoring of Town positions. It was also recommended that it may be helpful to have the consultant present to the Committee to explain the results and/or methodology.

2) **Overview of Human Resources & Labor Relations Program**

Informational packets were distributed by staff to committee members. Packets included: Town-wide and non-union position summary tables, labor contracts, and personnel rules. The packets are intended to serve as a resource to committee members.

Town Manager Hart presented and facilitated a discussion regarding the Town's HR and Labor Relations Program. General topics included: labor relations and collective bargaining, nonunion employees, recruitment procedures, administration of employee benefits, and future projects. A copy of the presentation will be attached to these meeting minutes. Additional highlights of the discussion included:

- Non-certified school employees are eligible under the Municipal Employee Relations Act (MERA).

- SEIU/CSEA dropped its affiliation with AFL-CIO.
- The Manager's Office conducts quarterly meetings with applicable department head(s) and union representatives to ensure a positive working relationship.
- The Town has approximately 20-25 employees in the Public Works Union, 4 employees in the Police Union, 42 employees in the Professional and Technical Union, approximately 21-24 employees in the Firefighters Union, and 22-24 employees that are non-union.
- The Town establishes and maintains FLSA designation (exempt/nonexempt) for positions. FLSA designations were presented to and accepted by the Professional/Technical Union.
- Recruitment Process:
 - Deputy Mayor Haddad inquired as to whether or not the Town conducts training for department heads that is specific to the interviewing process. It was suggested that the Town conduct a workshop for managers and department heads regarding interview techniques.
 - It was further recommended by Councilor Koehn that the Town Manager and/or Assistant to the Town Manager be involved with the recruitment process for positions, particularly for the oral board(s).
 - Town Manager Hart discussed the limitations to the "rule of three" when interviewing and selecting candidates and that he would like to expand the number of finalists for positions. Linda Kwong, graduate intern is conducting research regarding this topic.
 - Town Manager Hart discussed his desire to build-in a blended approach to our recruitment process (outside panel/oral board, inside panel, oral board, one-on-one interview with the hiring manager, and written/practical exams when applicable).
 - Discussion amongst the group occurred as to possible ways of increasing diversity within the organizations, both at the staff and board/committee levels.
 - Town Manager Hart discussed the possibility of bringing the Town's customer service policy before Council (policy refresher).
 - Discussion occurred regarding the benefits of hiring external facilitators to conduct training on-site for municipal employees. Other training opportunities discussed were courses/seminars offered by community colleges, Bishop Center, staff presenting information to other staff members, etc. Councilor Koehn discussed the professional development fund established for some unions at the University of Connecticut and some of its benefits to employees.
 - Benefits Administration:

- Town Manager Hart stated that benefits are now fairly consistent amongst unions.
- Full-time employees are required to participate in the Municipal Employee Retirement System (MERS) which is administered by the State. Pension portability is somewhat limiting and has an impact on recruiting efforts.
- Town Manager Hart discussed the potential contract the Town may enter into with the Eastern Highlands Health District to administer the Town's wellness program at the local level.
- Deputy Mayor Haddad inquired as to whether or not the Town has an EAP Program. Town Manager Hart stated that the Town has utilized United Services for many years to conduct counseling services for employees and their dependents.
- The Personnel Rules were last updated in 1995. The Town Manager's Office will be working to revise the personnel rules.

3) **Town Manager Goals and Objectives**

- Committee members and the Town Manager discussed long and short term goals for the Manager. Further discussion of goals will occur at a future meeting.